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receiving a call within a call center switch that is connected to a call center via a Host Interface Link (HIL), said call center having an automatic call distributor (ACD) server and interactive voice response (IVR) server that is functionally integrated with the ACD server;

10 routing the call to the IVR server of the  
call center and soliciting responses from the caller to  
determine a requested type of service and what skills  
are required for answering a call;

determining within the call center a route request based on an HIL protocol that includes a new extension number and HIL messages; and

routing the call based on the route request back to the call center and to an agent via the ACD server and HIL link such that the call can be tracked while in the call center and in queue.

2. A method according to Claim 1, and further comprising the step of specifying within an HIL link failure timer the period of time that an HIL link will queue messages after a link has failed.

3. A method according to Claim 1, and further comprising the step of defining an HIL message format with a function code, process code, and message data field.

4. A method according to Claim 1, and further comprising the step of prioritizing a call based on one of at least number dialed (DNIS), number dialed from (ANI), and length of time a call is in queue.

5. A method according to Claim 1, and further comprising the step of routing the call to an agent that has the highest proficiency level for the skills required for answering the call based on the requested type of service.

6. A method according to Claim 1, wherein if the agent that has the highest proficiency level is not available to receive the call, then routing the call to agents with selectively lower proficiency levels.

7. A method of tracking calls received within a call center comprising the steps of:  
establishing the skills that will be available within the call center by inputting skills data, including a listing of skills and proficiency levels for each skill, via an automatic call distributor (ACD) manager;  
setting up agents that are used within the call center by listing each agent within the ACD manager and selectively mapping skills to each individual agent via the ACD manager and corresponding to what types of skills the agent possesses;  
receiving a call within a call center switch that is connected to the call center via a Host Interface Link (HIL), said call center having an automatic call distributor (ACD) server and interactive voice response (IVR) server that is functionally integrated with the ACD server;  
routing the call to the IVR server of the call center and soliciting responses from the caller to determine a requested type of service and what skills are required for answering a call;

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25 determining within the call center a route request based on an HIL protocol that includes a new extension number and HIL messages; and

routing the call based on the route request back to the call center and to an agent via the ACD server and HIL link such that the call can be tracked while in the call center and in queue.

8. A method according to Claim 7, and further comprising the step of specifying within an HIL link failure timer the period of time that an HIL link will queue messages after a link has failed.

9. A method according to Claim 7, and further comprising the step of defining an HIL message format with a function code, process code, and message data field.

10. A method according to Claim 7, and further comprising the step of prioritizing a call based on one of at least number dialed (DNIS), number dialed from (ANI), and length of time a call is in  
5 queue.

11. A method according to Claim 7, and further comprising the step of routing the call to an agent that has the highest proficiency level for the skills required for answering the call based on the  
5 requested type of service.

12. A method according to Claim 7, wherein if the agent that has the highest proficiency level is not available to receive the call, then routing the call to agents with selectively lower proficiency  
5 levels.

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